
Introduced by Senator Blakeslee

March 14, 2012

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 75—Relative to Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 75, as introduced, Blakeslee. Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month. This measure would declare the month of May 2012 to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month in California.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, Liver disease and liver cancer are among the eight
2 most common causes of death in California; and
3 WHEREAS, Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are the leading causes
4 of primary liver cancer, one of the most deadly forms of cancer;
5 and
6 WHEREAS, Hepatitis C is the most prevalent bloodborne
7 disease in the United States and in California; and
8 WHEREAS, While the numbers are understated due to
9 inadequate surveillance, public health experts estimate that more
10 than 450,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis
11 C and 280,000 Californians are chronically infected with hepatitis
12 B; and
13 WHEREAS, An undetected and untreated hepatitis B or hepatitis
14 C infection can lead to disability or death; and
15 WHEREAS, The fatality rate has doubled for hepatitis C in
16 California since 2002; and
17 WHEREAS, The majority of California residents with chronic
18 hepatitis C infection and hepatitis B infection do not know that

1 they are infected and are, therefore, at a higher risk of severe liver
2 disease, liver cancer, or liver failure; and

3 WHEREAS, Untreated hepatitis B and hepatitis C infections
4 are leading causes of liver failure requiring a liver transplant; and

5 WHEREAS, There is a vaccine for the prevention of hepatitis
6 B, which is the first proven, low-cost vaccination against any form
7 of cancer made available to Americans; and

8 WHEREAS, The cost of hospitalizations for hepatitis B and
9 hepatitis C related liver cancer, liver disease, and liver
10 transplantation in 2010 exceeded \$2 billion in California, most of
11 which was paid for by tax-supported, public health insurers; and

12 WHEREAS, Experts estimate that the annual medical costs for
13 treating Americans with chronic hepatitis C infection are expected
14 to increase more than 2.5 times, from \$30 billion to more than \$85
15 billion over the next 20 years; and

16 WHEREAS, Hepatitis awareness education campaigns and
17 accessible screening for hepatitis B and hepatitis C, along with
18 appropriate treatment, can reduce the financial, as well as physical
19 and emotional, damage from hepatitis B and hepatitis C viral
20 infections to individuals and to our community; now, therefore,
21 be it

22 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the Assembly*
23 *thereof concurring*, That the Legislature declares the month of
24 May 2012 to be Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month in California;
25 and be it further

26 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit sufficient
27 copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.